

Stride & Tested

Denmead Striders

October 2019

Running and the domino effect!

Clare Welch

In January this year I was struggling to think of what to get one of my best friends for her birthday. Back on her 40th year she done a little jar which was "things to do now I'm 40" in which she asked all her friends to put in suggestions. As you can imagine there were drinks involved this evening and not everyone's answers were very useful. However mine I thought was very sensible and was to enter a 10 mile race. She had mentioned on numerous occasions my jar entry and that she must do a race but just didn't ever seem to get round to it. So in a light bulb moment for her 41st Birthday I decided what better than to sign her up for the Great South Run as her gift.

I know what you are thinking – get Clare friend of the year award but she was a little taken a back to say the least!

Anyway 10 months on and we are now nearing the event and all being well Tanya (my friend) and I are getting ready to run the race together. She has been nothing but committed since I signed her up, upping her mileage and taking part in the Great Run Local on a Sunday. All along she has said she is not worried about time but funnily enough she can't help but message me and tell me how quickly she done 6 miles and her latest Great Run time! So somehow I think on Sunday she may be pushing me along as she has some very long pins on her! (Note to self - Must choose shorter friends!)

It just amazes me how running can have such a domino effect and how someone can start off so differently to when you see them nearing the end of their goal.

Some of us don't realise how we can motivate someone and I guess human nature is that we are all quite modest in our thinking. However believe me that each and everyone of us in the club, out pounding the pavement in whatever shape or form, be it ridiculous long runs to someone that is just managing to step outside their front door and pluck up the courage to come along training you are inspiring someone, somewhere.

I am sure that Tanya will be nothing but brilliant on Sunday and it has been such a great thing to witness and be part of her journey. For me personally to know that on this occasion I have been a catalyst in that and perhaps provided a bit of inspiration for her makes me a happy bunny.

So just remember - someone somewhere thinks you're pretty awesome!

Race dates – December & January 2020

December 2019

Victory 5 Mile	1 st
<i>Southampton Common 10k</i>	1 st
<i>Santa Fun Run</i>	7 th
<i>Bourne Woods (XCOUNTRY)</i>	8 th
<i>Running Grand Prix Goodwood</i>	8 th
<i>Lord Wandsworth (XCOUNTRY)</i>	29 th

January 2020

Stubbington Green 10k	12 th
Chawton House (XCOUNTRY)	19 th
Romsey 5 Mile Race	26 th
Farnborough	26 th

Striders Stats
PB's by Clare

August & September Well done to:

Name	Race	Time
Kirsty Aked	Overton 5m	00:33:07
Kirsty Aked	Solent Half	01:29:08
Lisa Peckover	Overton 5m	00:36:54
Neil Williams	Solent Half	01:18:15

Xmas Do – 6th DECEMBER

Now that the dark nights are upon us it means only one thing...Xmas Do.

It will be held in the same place as last year the RNA Club which is behind Sainsbury's Waterlooville on the Aston Road estate.

It is usually a great opportunity to see Julian and his dancing skills so come along and join in the fun. It is free to all members too!

Denmead 10k

Firstly we would like to say a massive THANK YOU to everyone that played a part in the Denmead 10K. From the Race Committee, everyone that gave up their Sunday to come along and volunteer and all the runners that took part in a race we should be proud of.

Unfortunately it appears there was a lack of communication re Striders entering the race. The stance was that no striders were to enter as we have struggled with help on the day and also felt it was a bit self indulgent with us winning a lot of the prizes. We appreciate that this was not communicated enough with the reasons behind it and some entrants slipped through the net, this was difficult to monitor with entries going direct through full on sport.

Moving forward the committee will ensure that we communicate in as many channels as possible to prevent frustrations in future.

The secret of my Success

Jeffery Streeter

To put into perspective the amazing journey I have been on, I can reflect on a quote by football's former Liverpool and England goalkeeper Chris Kirkland : "Living with anxiety isn't living". Having suffered with anxiety for a number of years, this certainly rings true. Every day normal things that people take for granted are an obvious absentee from my day to day life. Having people in my life to have a drink with, go to the cinema with, go to a restaurant with or just have a general chat with has always been an all too rare experience. Even on the odd occasion over a 25 year period when it has happened, even the simplest thing like ordering a meal in a restaurant has proved an uncomfortable moment. Friendships were non-existent, and a meaningful relationship was just an impossible dream.

As you can imagine, joining a running club surrounded by people I didn't know was an all too daunting prospect. So much so, that even on a first attempt of trying to persuade me to join, Clare Welch had no success. My anxiety and fear would get the better of me on that occasion in 2015.

So what changed?

Having originally taken up running in 2011 in an attempt to complete the 10 mile Great South Run in honour of my Father who had passed away four years previous, my main drive was determination having been mocked and told I would never be able to do it. Weighing in at a hefty 18 stone 12 lbs, it did seem like the impossible. But I stuck at it, and proved those who doubted me wrong. The next dream after that was to do The London Marathon, having been hooked on running from that first race I done. Little did I know at the time that actually running it was far more easier to do than actually getting a place in it!

So long story short, I kept at the running, the races kept coming and my love for running grew and grew. The years continued to go by, but I was still a lonely soul missing just having friends and company that all too often people can take for granted. But, I achieved things I never thought possible. I kept getting faster, pb's became more achievable, I ran in an Olympic Stadium on the same track as superstars such as Sir. Mo Farrah, Dame Jessica Ennis-Hill and Usain Bolt, and more amazingly I entered via charity and made it to the London Marathon for the first time in 2017. But what now? What was left to achieve? Could I ever better my success? By the middle of 2018, my simple answer was "no". I had nothing left. As far as I was concerned my running journey was over. Despite all my achievements, I was still missing what for me is one of the most vital parts of life, having special people in your life.

Then by a twist of fate while out for a run one morning and nearing the end of my running journey, I happened to run past a Lidl Supermarket in Cowplain, where a very beautiful, cheery young woman was taking a sit down while obviously out running herself. She smiled and gave me a wave, and it made my day. Naturally, due to anxiety I would never have the courage to speak to her. Weeks went by, and I would occasionally see her, and then more runners there on a weekly basis. In fairness I went that way regularly just so I could see her. Her early morning enthusiasm and warmth captivated my heart. She started to become a highlight of my week. Then one week I decided I really wanted to meet this lovely lady, and get to meet new people, so I knew I had to be brave and fight my anxiety to ask about joining the group. Little did I know at the time, they belonged to the same running club Clare Welch tried to

convince me to join some years previous.

In early December 2018, I went along for my first Denmead Striders Social Run and the rest as they say is history. I started to meet so many wonderful and amazing people. People I could look up to and aspire to be like, and above all, people I knew I would love and befriend. My running under guidance of coaching and running with others improved rapidly, and I began smashing previous times, and my love for running had been reborn.

Months have flown by during my first year with Denmead Striders, but it has seen me take almost a full hour off my London Marathon PB during my second appearance in April 2019. My half marathon PB has dropped to well under the 2 hour mark, and sub 1 hour 10k's are pretty much the norm now.

Living with anxiety is indeed not living, but living with amazing friends is the secret of my success. Many runners of all abilities look up to and idolise the likes of Mo Farrah, Usain Bolt, Jessica Ennis-Hill and Paula Radcliffe. But for me, hand on heart, the runners I will always idolise and admire go by the names of Gemma Higgs, Hannah Curtis, Tillie Johnstone, Gill Evans, Adam Chant, Paul Welch and Michael Harrison to name but just a few. Because of them, I have happiness. Not only do I get to admire great athletes, I am honoured to be able to say they are dear friends and athletes I can train with on a regular basis.

Anxiety can lead to me being unable to talk to people when deep down it's what I want to do more than anything. All too often over the years it would be mistaken for or perceived as being arrogant or ignorant, which couldn't be further from the truth. So be rest assured, if I speak to you and talk to you, chances are you're pretty special to me, and that is why Denmead Striders Running Club will always be a big part of my life and close to my heart :-)

Striders Photos

**Saturday Morning Lidl Crew
Jenny Parks**



**Woodland Way Selfie
Gary McCawley**



**Making use of the race T-shirts!
Terry Aked**



**It's a Marshals life
Kev Raymond**



**Bournemouth Half
Cattie Pettit**



Getting to know you, getting to know one another....

This month's insight is from someone that we have not seen much of lately but hope to have her back in the mix soon – Ali Thomas

Q & A with Ali Thomas

What made you join the Striders?

Lisa Peckover. After the summer plod many moons ago, after a game of cat and mouse for most of the way between me her and a lanky guy who clearly didn't enjoy us overtaking him, before I fell over a tree root and had to hobble to the finish, Her and Gary Armstrong were there at the end giving everyone a good cheer in...as they were so lovely when they saw blood pouring out of my knee I figured that the striders were the friendliest club in the area so seemed like the best one to join!

What inspired you to start running?

I honestly can't remember. I've been running since I was 16 so it was probably some crazy diet thing. I continue to run (and want to run when I'm laid up or held up by life) because it gives me some space and time to thinking time....and a break from the everyday.

What's your favourite distance and why?

None of them. I hate racing, it makes me really anxious and I always fall over. If I really had to pick 10 mile or longer...something where you can get into the rhythm or the run and takes you out of town with no other route back but to follow the course.

Cross country or road?

Doesn't matter, I'll fall over on both. At least cross country the landing is softer.

Summer/winter training?

Winter. Only because running in the rain makes you 100% more hard core, and running in snow is so awesome.

Favourite club session?

Anything with a more social element or that I would not do myself. Summer handicap but only if its not too hot!

Any club inspirations and why?

After all the hardwork and discipline she put in to earn herself good for age in London, it has to be Suzanne Richardson.

Any pre run/race superstitions or prep?

Only that at some point on race day I will fall over. Its always a nice surprise when it doesn't result in any serious injury.

Favourite medal?

London 2012, Purely because it was Olympic year. Otherwise the Worthing 10km because they are always so colourful.

